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WHO'S THE NEW BAD BOY

The new character on 'Stranger Things' wants to be your new favorite TV villain. 14-15

Things to watch for as Eagles host 49ers. 18

Scary things happen if Trump leaves office. 10

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A CAREER IN COMMUNITY

West Philly community center leader Terri Cousar Shockley is moving on but staying in the game. 4

RANDI FAIR, AD AMOROSI

WELCOME TO METRO PHILLY

MATT JUUL, FEATURES EDITOR

It's finally here! Grab a box of Eggos and head back to the "Upside Down" this weekend, because the second season of "Stranger Things" is finally here (well, on Netflix). But before you cozy up on your couch for an epic night of binge-watching, get to know Billy, the new bad boy of Hawkins, Indiana. I caught up with actor Dacre Montgomery to find out what fans can expect from the new high school villain.

TRUMP DECLARES PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY

1 President Donald Trump declared the opioid crisis a public health emergency on Thursday, stopping short of a national emergency declaration he promised months ago that would have freed up more federal money. Responding to a growing problem wreaking havoc in rural areas, Trump's declaration will redirect federal resources and loosen regulations to combat opioid abuse, senior administration officials said on a conference call with reporters. But it does not mean there will be more money to combat the crisis. Some critics, including Democratic lawmakers, said the declaration was meaningless without additional funding. "This epidemic is a national health emergency," Trump said at the White House. "Nobody has seen anything like what's going on now. As Americans, we cannot allow this to continue."

TRUMP BLOCKS SOME JFK FILES UNDER PRESSURE

2 President Donald Trump ordered the release of 2,800 documents related to the 1963 assassination of President John F. Kennedy but yielded to pressure from the FBI and CIA to block the release of some information, senior administration officials said. Congress had ordered in 1992 that all records relating to the investigation into Kennedy's death should be open to the public and set a deadline of Oct. 26, 2017, for the entire set to be made public. Trump had confirmed on Saturday that he would allow the documents to be made public. Administration officials told reporters that Trump ordered government agencies to study the redactions in the documents over the next 180 days to determine whether they needed to remain hidden from the public. After the review, Trump expected such withholdings to be rare.

5 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

LONDON ZOO

3 Humboldt penguins during the annual Halloween celebrations at ZSL London Zoo on Oct. 26, 2017 in London, England.

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BILLIONAIRE CHARGED IN OPIOID BRIBERY CASE

4 The billionaire founder of Insys Therapeutics Inc was arrested on Thursday on U.S. charges that he participated in a scheme with other executives to bribe doctors to prescribe a fentanyl-based cancer pain drug and to defraud insurers. John Kapoor, 74, who stepped down as chief executive of Insys in January, was charged with having engaged in conspiracies to commit racketeering, mail fraud and wire fraud in an indictment filed in federal court in Boston. He was arrested in Arizona, where Insys is based, and added as a defendant in a previously filed case against six former Insys executives and managers, including former Chief Executive Michael Babich, prosecutors said. Brian Kelly, Kapoor's lawyer, said in an email: "My client is innocent and he intends to fight these charges vigorously."

TWITTER BANS ADS FROM RUSSIAN MEDIA OUTLETS

5 Twitter Inc on Thursday accused Russian media outlets Russia Today and Sputnik of interfering in the 2016 U.S. election and banned them from buying ads on its network, after criticism the social network had not done enough to deter international meddling. RT and Sputnik condemned the decision, saying Twitter had encouraged ad spending with its sales tactics, while Russia's foreign ministry said the ban was due to U.S. government pressure and that it planned to retaliate. San Francisco-based Twitter said in an unsigned statement on its website that election meddling is "not something we want" on the social network. It cited a report this year from U.S. intelligence agencies and said it had also done its own investigations of RT and Sputnik.

POLL

38%

President Donald Trump's approval ratings took another hit this week, with a Fox News poll showing the president's numbers are poor even among his white voting base. The president now holds a 38 percent approval rating, down from 42 percent in September.

Source: Fox News poll

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West Philly community center leader moving on, but not out of the game

Terri Cousar Shockley leaves the Community Education Center after 20 years.

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When dancer-choreographer Terri Cousar Shockley moved from New York City to Philadelphia in 1997, she hardly expected to stay in this city, let alone wind up as the executive director of Powelton Village's Community Education Center for the next 20 years.

"I had zero experience with administration – I was a dancer," she said with a laugh from her office at the CEC on Lancaster Avenue near Drexel.

Yet, stay she did – first as a CEC resident artist-turned-intern – at the urging of her renowned playwright husband, Philly's Ed Shockley.

Now, after 20 years of her leadership, and with art, education, cultural and fitness programs in full swing, and with the city having given the Lancaster Avenue property to the CEC (after leasing it from the city since opening in 1973), their longtime director can step down in peace.

"I'll be 65 in a few days, and I. Am. Retiring," she said jokingly. In celebration, a lease-burning retirement party and CEC fundraiser in her name will take place on Friday, Oct. 27, at 7 p.m. at 3500 Lancaster Ave., featuring dancers, musicians and theatre artists who have long been part of Shockley's extended family.

"When I got here, I was in shock, first because Philly was a big town but hardly New York at that point," Shockley said.

Terri Cousar Shockley, executive director of the Powelton Village Community Education Center, is preparing to retire. AD AMOROSI

"And we moved from Old City to 18th and Erie to South Philly, before I got to CEC, so I saw all sides of Philadelphia."

Once she wound up at CEC in 1997, Shockley quickly rose in its ranks to executive director. "Mainly because no one else wanted to do the job," she laughed. "I wasn't good with numbers – still not, and I'm lucky to have had great people with me since the start."

Since 1997, she has not only brought the finest in American and international arts to the CEC (Sun Ra Arkestra was a frequent guest), but also community-related, socially minded advocates, educators and politicians. Next week for example, on Nov. 1, Larry Krasner, candidate for Philadelphia DA, will give a talk at the CEC. "I'd like to think that I made a difference by making a difference, by keeping a balance of arts, education and social and political discourse," she said.

One of the reasons Shockley is leaving her position at CEC is that as a onetime dancer, being an administrator has rooted her to a chair. "I can't stand being in one place, let alone this chair. It's not healthy." Shockley said she wants to make a business of teaching middle-aged adults so that they don't atrophy, in the mind, spirit or body.

Then there is the matter of her Richard Rogers Ward-winning playwright husband, who suffered a stroke in 2012 and has the lingering language-impairment aphasia. "Ed is the most positive person that I have ever known, and I think that I'd like to help act as a manager-administrator-agent for him and his work as he's not quite ready to do that yet," she said.

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Weavers Way co-op keeps growing with new store in Ambler

Philly's biggest co-op opens its biggest store ever.

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Weavers Way, a food cooperative and Philly institution, has finally made the jump from the cramped city stores that are part of its identity to a suburban grocery store where customers can pilot their carts through wide aisles with ease. But the core day-to-day challenges of running a member-owned, cooperative grocery store with socially progressive aims and high standards for food quality tend to stay the same wherever you are.

"I've got a dilemma right here," said Jon Roesser, general manager for Weavers Way at its newest location in Ambler, Pennsylvania, while clutching a bunch of fair-trade bananas. "We charge 99 cents a pound for bananas. Bananas are something you really can't compromise on. At our other stores, they're a top seller, but here, they're just sitting on the shelves. Maybe that's just a bridge too far for some people."

Given the Ambler Weavers Way (joining the original Mt. Airy location, located inside two combined rowhomes, and the Chestnut Hill location on Germantown Avenue) has only been open a few days, it may be too early to tell.

Finding a balance between food quality and supporting fair business practices is often a central challenge for food co-ops, which hope members will pay prices often a little higher than other stores if they know the payment is going to a quality local food producer.

"This to me is a microcosm of the store," Roesser said as he approached the store's fresh bread cabinet, before reading off the names of the local bakeries who supplied various rolls and loaves. "This alone is seven or eight awesome local bakers that we're helping to employ, instead of people buying junk bread from God knows where."

Roesser said Weavers Way evaluates food supplies by looking first for a local grower or producer then checking off how they rate on aspects like sustainability, price, labor practices, ingredients and quality.

Other features Weavers Way will offer for the first time in Ambler include a large cafe area, a fresh deli and a large meat counter. It's also right across the parking lot from the Ambler Beverage Company beer store. Owner Jim Carter said he was pleased to see Weavers Way move in: "Ambler needs a place to buy some lettuce," he said.

Store manager Kathryn Worley, left, and Weavers Way general manager Jon Roesser inside the brand-new Weavers Way location in Ambler. SAM NEWHOUSE

The new Weavers Way location was formerly occupied by a Bottom Dollar and Acme but was vacant for several years. Ambler residents started efforts to turn it into their own co-op in 2012 before joining forces with Weavers Way.

It has nearly 60,000 square feet, compared to 11,000 at the Mt. Airy Weavers Way, so it represents a sea change for the organic food-loving Philadelphians running the store.

"This really is not that big, but for us, it's huge," said Mary Sweeten, a Weavers Way spokeswoman. "Once you're in here, you'll start to see there's more than food going on."

Weavers Way Ambler is located at 217 E. Butler Ave. in Ambler, Pennsylvania. Grand opening celebrations are scheduled for this weekend. For more information, visit weaversway.coop.

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Ducky the cat is looking for a forever home. COURTESY OF ACCT

Meet Ducky, the cat who waddles like a baby duck

This special cat has survived a lot and is now looking for a home.

JAYSON FLORES
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Lori Hobson DiFigliam – a veterinary technician for the University Of Pennsylvania's shelter medicine program – works with animals every day through her work with UPenn and unpaid work as a volunteer at the Animal Care and Control Team (ACCT) of Philadelphia.

"I was volunteering in surgery at ACCT, and one of the vet nurses asked me to come and meet a special kitten," DiFigliam told us. When DiFigliam laid eyes on Ducky the cat, she was captivated immediately. With her legs spread out wide behind her, the 3-month-old cat waddled from side-to-side like a baby duck. Ducky had no idea she was different, though. She wanted what most cats want.

"Ducky was rolling around on her back, and reaching out with her paws to solicit attention," DiFigliam said.

Due to her unique medical condition, Ducky was promoted by ACCT as rescue-only. This decision was made for Ducky, and others like her, because it's unethical to adopt out an animal whose medical future is so uncertain.

"Not knowing what her medical bills would amount to, it's difficult for rescues that are already full and underfunded to take on these cases," DiFigliam began. "She was sadly out of options. It only took meeting her to know that she had a spirit that could survive and just needed a chance."

And thus, Ducky became DiFigliam's happy foster kitty. But this was just the beginning of Ducky's journey.

In the coming months, Ducky would face a number of medical difficulties. "After I brought her home, I took her to our personal vet for X-rays. It appeared that she had a partially crushed spine." They took the cat to a chiropractor but it didn't seem have much effect. Eventually, after ensuring that Ducky would be okay, DiFigliam approved Ducky for spinal surgery. Before surgery, however, Ducky found herself in another messy situation.

"In the meantime, while climbing on top of some shelves, Ducky got her leg caught and fractured the femoral head on her hind leg."

"The nex step was a neurologist, who found a cyst on her spine that he felt may be causing the abnormal gait and the incontinence." One might think that DiFigliam would be discouraged and frustrated, but she explained that Ducky's spirit and willpower were so strong that she simply couldn't give up or slow down.

Ducky was a star in DiFigliam's home, behaving as any other cat would. "Ducky takes on our 90-pound dog as an equal, soliciting play and bouncing off of his body like a pinball," she said. "She is the first to welcome new fosters with a positive greeting and a 'let me show you around' proposition. She is happiest surrounded by people and other animals."

Ducky has had her surgeries but still has some of her unique quirks. "She still walks like an adorable duck. She still needs a little help to fully empty her bladder, and if you want to keep your floors from getting soggy, she still needs to wear a darling tiny cat diaper. Her personality is still remarkable."

Ducky is waiting for her forever home, though, not so patiently, DiFigliam reports. "Many potential adopters come to meet the animals that we have in foster care. Most of them bring a carrier to take their new friends home in. Ducky dives into every open carrier and refuses to get out without doing battle. I believe this is her way of saying, 'Pick me!'"

Neither ACCT nor DiFigliam will give up on Ducky. "Ducky reminds me every day that 'normal' has nothing to do with being happy, and that adaptability is key to survival."

People are often intimidated by adopting special needs cats, believing them to be too much work. But if you ask DiFigliam, cats like Ducky are worth it. "There is a special adopter for every special cat, they just need an advocate and a little time to find each other."

To adopt Ducky, please check out her page on Petango, or to support more cats like Ducky, please donate to ACCT Philly.

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Trump changes course on fugitive upon learning he's a Mar-a-Lago member

President Trump reportedly had second thoughts about deporting a Chinese billionaire and fugitive who has been accused of several crimes, including rape, after he discovered he was a paying member of his Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida.

Guo Wengui, a Chinese tycoon, fled China to the U.S. after learning he was going to be arrested on allegations against him including bribing, kidnapping, money laundering, fraud and rape.

According to the Wall Street Journal, President Trump received a letter from the Chinese government hand-delivered by Steve Wynn, a Las Vegas tycoon with business interests in Macau and China. The government letter asked Trump for assistance with getting Guo deported. Trump expressed interest in

President Donald Trump GETTY IMAGES

helping the Chinese government, but senior officials found ways to not allow it to happen.

Members of the Ministry of State Security in China flew to New York to meet with Guo and to get him to travel back to the country.

Liu Yanping, the lead official with China's security agency, was heard telling Guo about the consequences of him remaining in the United States and denying the allegations made against him in audio recordings, according to the Wall Street Journal. "You can't keep doing this forever," Liu said.

During a White House briefing in the Oval Office, when the president was set to discuss separate issues related to China, Trump brought up the letter that had been handed to him by Wynn. Trump reportedly said that he knew of at least one "Chinese criminal" that America needed to deport immediately. "Where's that letter Steve brought? We need to get this criminal out of the country."

According to the Wall Street Journal, Trump's aides managed to convince him to change his decision to have Guo deported by letting the president know Guo was a paying member of his Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida. LENYON WHITAKER

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The scary things that could happen if Trump leaves office

What President Pence could do.

MICHAEL MARTIN
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As governor of Indiana, Pence attempted to start his own taxpayer-funded news service to cover his administration. GETTY IMAGES

What could happen if Mike Pence becomes president? It's a question that's been asked almost since Trump finished his dystopian inauguration speech. And the volume has been escalating amid the president's bungled handling of his call to a Gold Star widow, his continued Twitter threats against North Korea, the slow build of the Russia investigation and his daily lying about matters large and small. Whether the 25th Amendment removes Trump from office (a long shot, most analysts say) or a Trump impeachment happens down the pike, here are some reasons why a Pence presidency could be a frightening scenario itself.

The Koch brothers could control the presidency.

Billionaire industrialists Charles and David Koch are "arguably the most powerful and influential funders of anti-government, anti-tax, anti-environment causes and candidates," writes David Horsey in the Los Angeles Times, favoring big business and the 1 percent at the expense of the middle class and progressives. They had planned to spend $889 million on the 2016 campaign, but decided not to support Trump. Yet: "They were pleased as punch with the elevation of Pence and are certainly even more pleased that the vice president helped usher into government so many people who are eagerly serving the economic interests of billionaires, big corporations and the fossil fuel industry," writes Horsey.

The government could tilt further toward theocracy.

Pence's oft-discussed religious piety isn't just for show — it seems to drive every significant decision he makes. "Even behind closed doors, Pence's moral rectitude and deep religiosity govern his affect and decision-making," writes Jason Zengerle in GQ. "During political or policy deliberations, the surest way for an adviser to win him over is to invoke God. In fact, the former [GOP] adviser says, when Pence was deciding whether to join the ticket of Trump, a thrice-married libertine, a Christ-like argument was offered in favor of accepting the offer. Proximity to people who are off the path, Pence was reminded, allows you to help them get on the path."

Trump's war on the media could continue.

Think Trump's cries of "fake news" would leave office with him? Maybe not. As governor of Indiana, Pence attempted to start his own taxpayer-funded news service to cover his administration. In 2015, the Indianapolis Star discovered that Pence was about to launch a site called JustIN, a news outlet run by a former Star reporter that would provide pre-written news stories to media. Although Pence claimed it was just a revamp of the state's PR efforts, he killed the site following an outcry.

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Sleeping pills don't actually help you sleep, or put you to sleep at all

The drugs technically only put you in "a state of unconsciousness."

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Imagine this scenario: You've been in bed since 11 p.m., but your mind is still racing a thousand miles a minute. You glance at the clock: It's 1:38 a.m. and you have to be up again at 5 to make it to work on time. Forget about eight hours; you just want one hour of sleep, so you take a couple of sleeping pills in a last-ditch attempt to drift off to dreamland.

Sound familiar? Probably: The National Sleep Foundation estimates that at least one in three people experiences at least mild insomnia — and relying on sleeping pills to help you doze off isn't doing you any favors, according to Matt Walker, a professor of neuroscience and psychology at the University of California, Berkeley.

"The quality of sleep that you have when you're on these drugs is not the same as normal, naturalistic sleep," he told The Cut.

Why sleeping pills don't work

Walker delves into the subject in his new book, "Why We Sleep," and says that these pills are "sedative hypnotics" that just knock you out without giving you the restorative powers of sleep.

"The way that they work is by targeting a set of receptors, or 'welcome sites,' in the brain that are lured to basically stop your brain cells from firing," he told The Cut. "They principally attack those sites in the cortex, this wrinkle of tissue on the top of your brain, and they just switch off the top of your cortex, the top of your brain, and put you into a state of unconsciousness."

Actual sleep, on the other hand, is an "incredibly complex ballet of neurochemical brilliance" that pharmaceuticals can't match. Don't just take his word for it: A committee of experts reviewed 65 studies on drug placebos and found that the impact of sleeping pills was small, at best. Walker says that any perceived benefit is psychological.

What to use instead of sleeping pills

So, are you doomed to spend more nights staring at the ceiling? Not necessarily: Walker — and the American College of Physicians — recommends a type of cognitive therapy known as CBT-I that involves traditional therapy with sleep restriction (only going to bed when you're sleepy) and education on good sleep habits. In other words, you change the way your brain processes sleep.

"Here's the recommendation: If you've been in bed for 20 minutes and you can't fall asleep, that's not good," Walker told the website. "The advice is: Get out of bed, go to a different room with dim lights, read a book, and only return to bed when you're sleepy" so your brain can "relearn" that your bed means sleep, not wakefulness.

And though it might be difficult, try to limit your caffeine intake after noon even if you think it doesn't bother your sleep.

"Even if you fall asleep fine, the depth of sleep, the quality of sleep that you will have, will not be as deep or as rich in quality if caffeine is circulating around the brain," he said. "And you don't know that, of course. You're still asleep. You're just not getting the best sleep that you could be."

The National Sleep Foundation estimates that at least one in three people experiences at least mild insomnia. ISTOCK

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Miles Teller as Adam Schumann UNIVERSAL PICTURES

'Thank You for Your Service' is an important movie for everyone

It doesn't matter where you stand on war — this is about much more.

GREGORY WAKEMAN
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No one needs to remind Miles Teller just how important the subject matter of "Thank You for Your Service" is. In fact, Teller was so concerned about the gravitas of taking on the role of Iraq war veteran and PTSD survivor Adam Schumann that he almost turned it down.

"I didn't want to embarrass him," says Teller. "And I didn't want to embarrass the military. I think even pretending, or acting, like you've done three deployments and went through the things that he went through; I don't know, something about that didn't feel right to me."

But to tell both the tale of war and of the difficulty of returning home was too important to neglect.

"I felt a real responsibility," he says, "and like I really wanted to be the person to tell his story."

"Thank You for Your Service" isn't just about Schumann's journey — it also revolves around Tausolo Aieti (Beulah Koale) and Will Waller (Joe Cole), both of whom made it home from war but struggled to adapt with their surroundings.

While Teller admits that he was "very nervous" about portraying a high-ranking officer in the Army, he felt the need to bring Schumann and his squad to the big screen to educate a wider audience on the aftermath of battle, and what it actually is we ask of our men and women in uniform.

"We're in the business of storytelling, and I think it's our job to entertain people for a form of escape," Teller says. "But the medium of film is extremely powerful and it can do something that an article just can't. [Movies] create an extremely visceral, eye-opening experience, and you can allow the audience to be a fly on the wall and really give the first-person perspective on what someone is going through. It's very powerful and you can shine a light on some issues that aren't being talked about enough, like this one."

A central issue addressed in this film is the lack of reintegration services provided to veterans.

"There are no programs, really," says Teller. "These guys come back, and in Adam's case he's carrying a fallen brother [the guy is shot in the head], and Adam is choking on his blood and swallowing parts of his brain, and all that s—t. Then a week later he's at home making pancakes for his kids. How quickly they expect these guys to make this transition was shocking to me."

Teller is hopeful that "Thank You for Your Service" can help to "lessen the divide between civilian and veteran," especially as during his extensive research he learned "that the men and women that serve this country are becoming more and more segregated."

"They're coming from very similar parts of the country," says Teller. "They're coming from similar economic backgrounds. It's not like these guys were drafted, and it's not like it is World War II, but people still don't think they have a patriotic duty [to support them]. I don't know, it just seems more and more divided. So I'm hoping people see this and — regardless of how you feel about war — they find it humanizing."

"Thank You for Your Service" is in cinemas from Oct. 27.

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UNIVERSAL PICTURES

"Thank You For Your Service"

Director: Jason Hall
Stars: Miles Teller, Haley Bennet
Rating: R

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"Thank You For Your Service" is a commendable endeavor, much more than a war story, and works for audiences on both sides of the aisle. Writer and director Jason Hall and star Miles Teller handle the subject matter in a probing, stark, realistic and engaging manner. Teller can't quite hit the heights of his past efforts, but he still brings a festering intensity that will keep you hooked. Meanwhile, Hall does a brilliant job highlighting the institutionalized flaws and injustices our veterans face after giving everything to our country, and effectively puts us in their shoes. Unfortunately "Thank You For Your Service" starts off on a high, but its authenticity dissipates toward the end. It's gallant, it's important, but it won't leave you with a satisfactory ending. GREGORY WAKEMAN

"God's Own Country"

Director: Francis Lee
Stars: Josh O'Connor, Alex Secareanu
Rating: R

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"God's Own Country" is an absorbing, unflinchingly intimate romantic drama that's destined to lazily be labeled as the British "Brokeback Mountain." It's not, though. It proudly beats to the sound of its own drum, as writer and director Francis Lee delves into his own past to bring the location, romance and complexity of his characters to life with an unerring eye. Lee does this while avoiding the sensationalist and melodramatic plot traits of similar films, which, if used, could've made "God's Own Country" derivative. Instead, certain scenes suddenly make you realize just how subtly seduced you've become by the unsentimental tear-jerker being played out on the big screen. Which is exactly why "God's Own Country" is one of the most surprising and touching films you'll see all year. GW

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"Suburbicon"

Director: George Clooney
Stars: Matt Damon, Julianne Moore
Rating: R

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You've already heard that "Suburbicon" is a categorical disaster, but hear me out — it's a waste of the star talent involved, but at worst it's utterly innocuous. While it's now clear that George Clooney's impact as a director peaked in 2005 with "Good Night and Good Luck," the presence of Matt Damon, Julianne Moore and Oscar Isaac, and the fact that the film was written by Oscar-winners Ethan Coen, Joel Coen, Grant Heslov and Clooney, all mean it should have been much better, it's not all that bad. Robert Elswit's cinematography is a high point, as he manages to create a beguiling mood, but neither the script nor Clooney's direction can take advantage of it. There's just enough to stop it from being a complete bore. But, come the end, you'll still think it was a waste of time. Save this one for pizza-and-Netflix night. GW

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Meet the new bad boy

Dacre Montgomery wants to be your new favorite TV villain.

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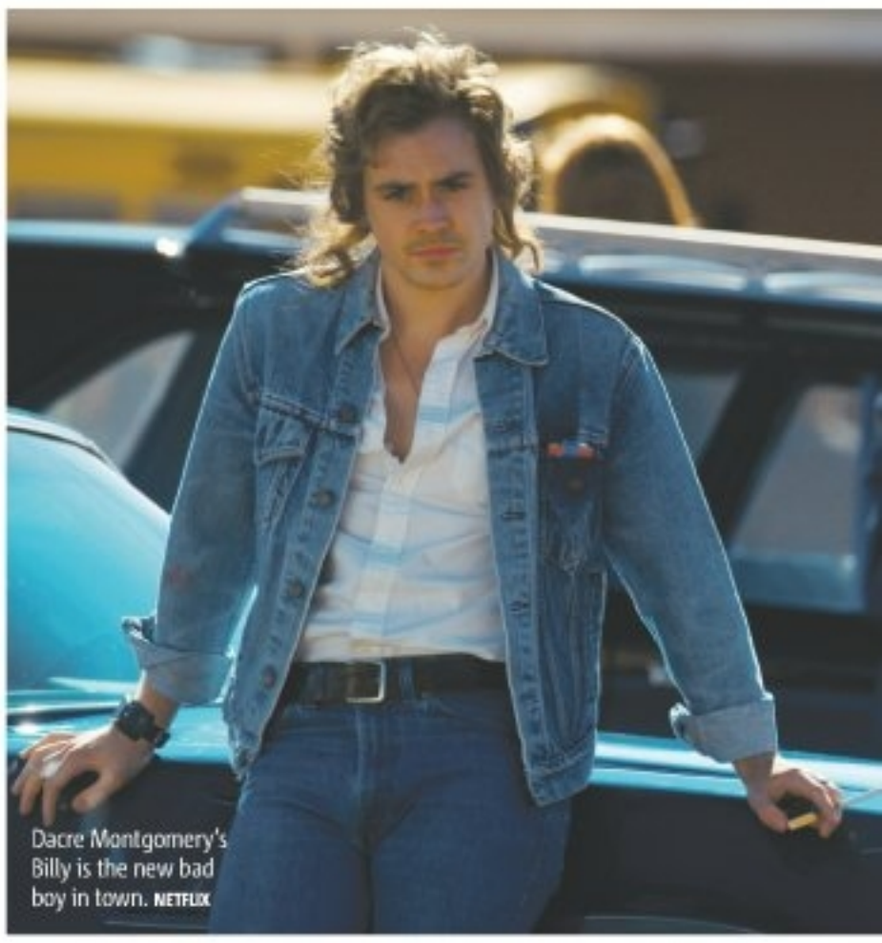
Dacre Montgomery's Billy is the new bad boy in town. NETFLIX

Move over, Frank Underwood, there's a new bad boy on Netflix, and his name is Dacre Montgomery.

The Aussie actor is trading in his red Power Ranger suit for an '80s mullet as he takes on the role of Billy for the highly anticipated second season of "Stranger Things." Montgomery tells Metro that he hopes the character will become a fan favorite, even though he's an "unpredictable" villain who terrorizes the young heroes of Hawkins, Indiana.

Ahead of the new season's debut, we caught up with the 22-year-old star to find out what fans can expect from Billy when "Stranger Things" returns.

Billy is the new bad boy in town. How does he factor into the new season?
He and Steve Harrington, Joe [Keery's] character, come head-to-head. He just feels threatened. The amazing actor Will Chase, who plays my father, he's the catalyst for the way that Billy is. When we first meet him in the first five episodes, this guy is like the stereotypical bully/jock character, but there's far more to it than that. When we meet his father, you can humanize the villain a little bit more by seeing that my father is more of a monster than I am. That just spawns out into everything. I'm hard on Lucas (Caleb McLaughlin) in the show because of his relationship with Sadie [Sink], the actress who plays Max, my stepsister.

Will Billy be a villain fans love to hate?
I hope so! I hope, because with antiheroes – like Kevin Spacey in "House of Cards" – you want to see a villain that's like, "Why do I like this guy so much? It's frustrating that I like him."

The Duffer brothers made you prepare for the role by watching a lot of Jack Nicholson's performances. How did his work influence your character?
Jack's acting style, specifically in "The Shining," there's an unpredictable quality to the character that

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of 'Stranger Things' season 2

makes scenes quite sinister. That's what I was taking from him.

How does Billy and Max's relationship play out on the show?

Everyone's like, "Billy's so hard on Max and doesn't care about Max," but I think he does. He cares about Max a lot. There's this thing from his stepmother and father to look after her, and maybe that's what's driving him. I have a sister, and we're the same age difference as me and Sadie. At the end of the day, he has to love his sister and care about his sister in order to follow up, to see where she is and make sure that she's not getting into trouble. Because he's a teenager, there are all these chemicals, this journey to manhood, it just comes out in different ways – anger, a lot of the time. God bless Sadie, because she's an amazing actress and wise beyond her years.

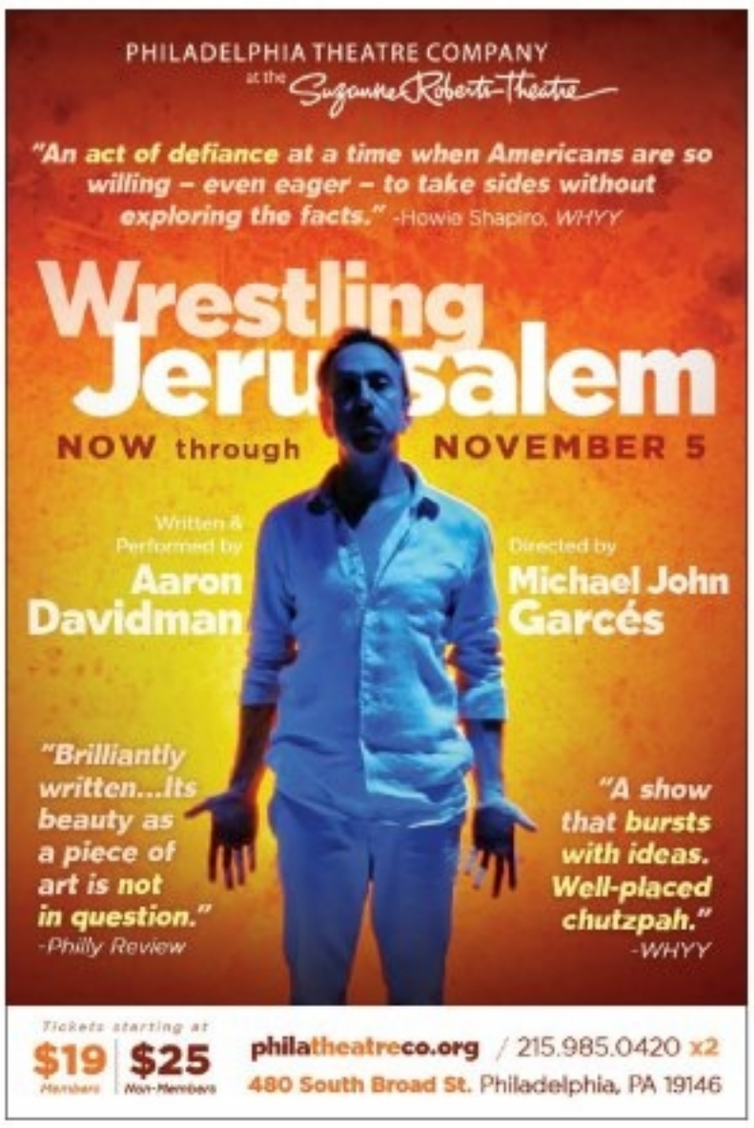
Has your experience with rabid "Power Rangers" fans prepared you for dealing with the devoted "Stranger Things" fandom?

I hope that it did. I think "Power Rangers" and "Stranger Things," there's small differences. "Stranger Things," the fandom is much newer, it's much fresher. People are very, very keen to see this second season as soon as possible. Having seen the cast of the first season and how they've navigated life through their loss of their anonymity over the last few months, a combination of that and "Power Rangers" has probably prepared me a little bit. I try to imagine that I have a grasp of what it's going to be like, but I truly don't think that I do.

Should fans expect you to dress up as your "Power Rangers" character or Billy for Halloween this year?

I'm so bad with costumes. One of my mates said I should be a red Power Ranger with a mullet [laughs]. I don't know.

"Stranger Things" season 2 debuts on Netflix Oct. 27.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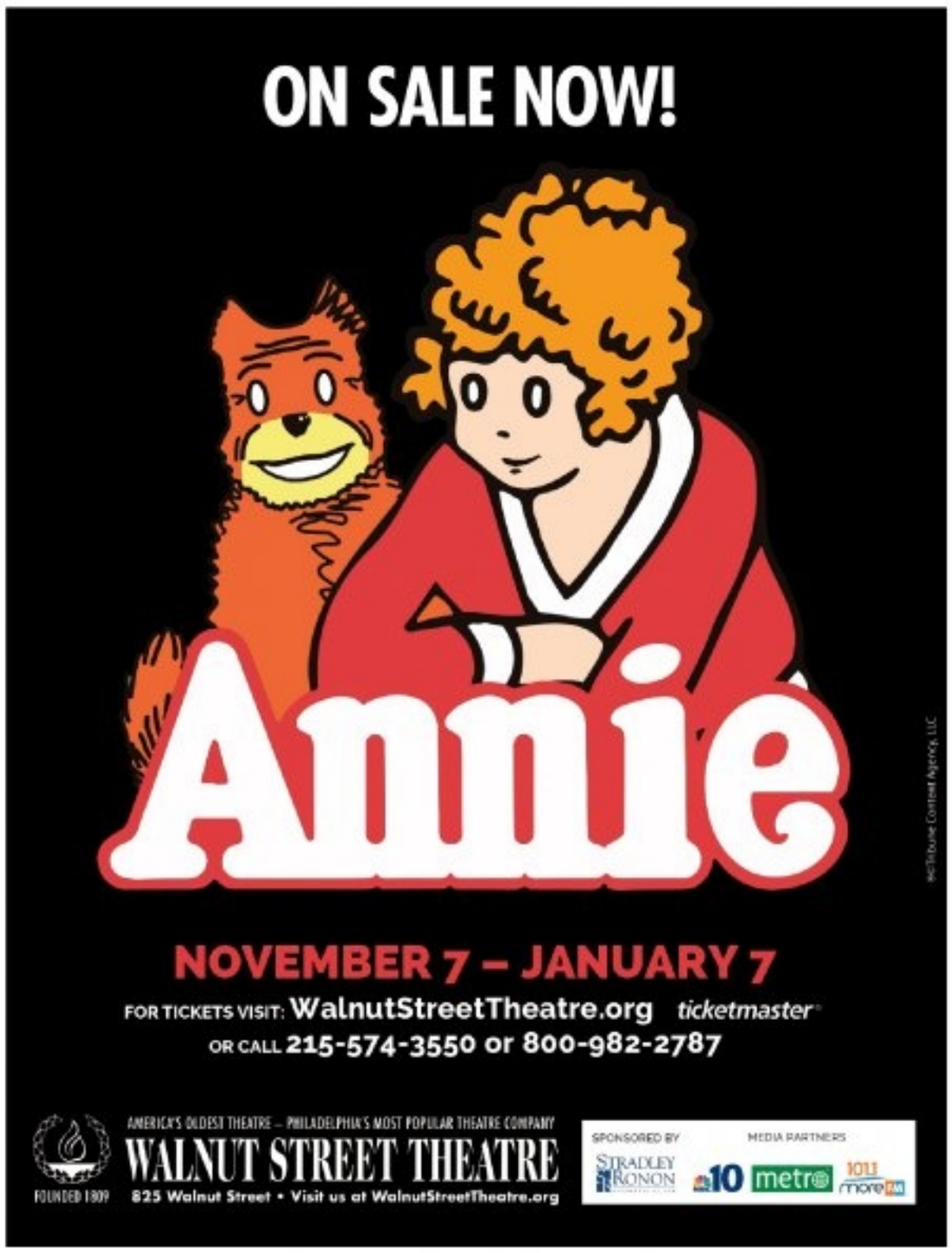
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Ripe Time's 'Sleep' Awakens at

Haruki Murkami's "Sleep" is brought to the stage at Harold Prince Theater by the Annenberg Center. ALL PHOTOS ALIETA CERVANTES

Brooklyn-based theater company Ripe Time chose Philadelphia to host the world premiere of this work.

Murakami's short story comes to life with an emotive, dreamlike theater performance.

KYLE V. HILLER
@MetroPhilly
letters@metro.us

If you've ever read anything by Haruki Murakami ("1Q84," "Kafka on the Shore"), you know that he has a knack for composing subtle and unnerving narratives. His stories compel wonder out of the mundane and warns of the underlying dangers in the fabrics of daily life. His 1994 short story "Sleep" lives up to that expectation, and the Obie-winning, Brooklyn-based theater company Ripe Time will be bringing the world premiere to Philadelphia this weekend. Led by artistic director Rachel Dickstein, the company has garnered critical acclaim and devoted audiences for creating physically rigorous, visually powerful adaptations of classic and contemporary stories by authors.

"Sleep" centers on a young housewife who suffers a terrifying dream and suddenly stops sleeping. In her new sleep-deprived

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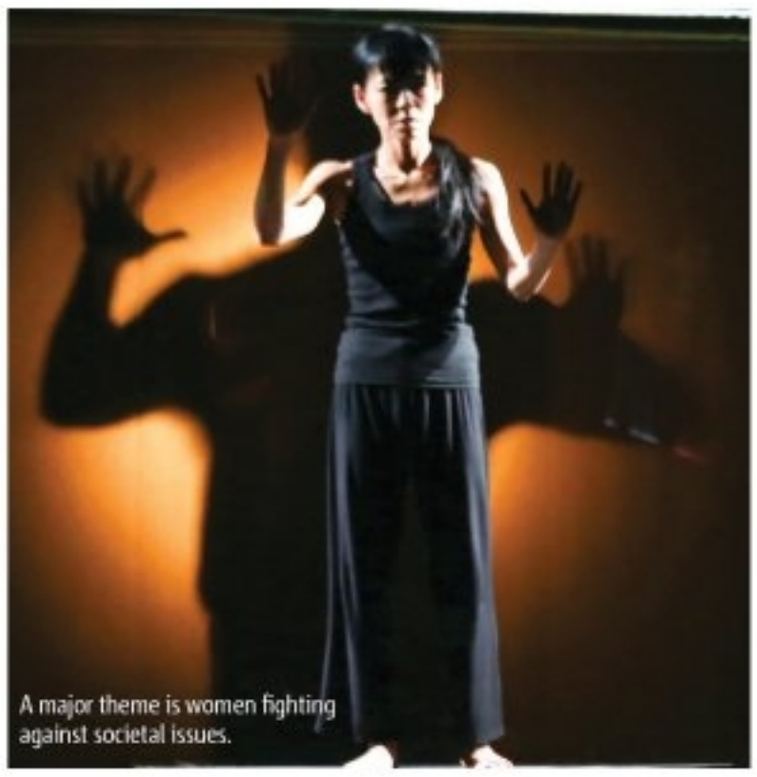
world, the constrictions of her prescribed role melt away, empowering her to take risks, indulge in the forbidden and embrace the unpredictable. This liberation may be enthralling at first, but it forebodes that freedoms for women are still severely curbed. Her bout with insomnia serves as a metaphor for freeing oneself from numbing routines and expectations.

Adapted for the company by Alpert Award-winner Naomi Iizuka, "Sleep" is a full sensory work that builds on Ripe Time's history of creating adventurous theater. "The aesthetic aspect of the theater company is to tell stories about women who are fighting against societal issues," Dickstein said in an interview. "Murakami created a world where a woman lives a quiet life as a housewife and goes through the looking glass into a surreal dream." What starts as straddling along the lines of lucid dreams and uncanny insomnia evolves into the revelation the woman has about her potential and the battles that lie ahead as a result.

"There are always restrictions on women, despite the sense that we've advanced," Dickstein added. "This administration, this climate and all the conversations of harassment and assault are proof that women aren't living free lives. We're often put in boxes for our personalities and our sexualities." At the core, "Sleep" is a story about a woman who realizes there is a possibility to live beyond prescriptive life. "At the end of the story, there's danger. There's suggestion of not necessarily an entirely free and happy path. We don't know if she will survive." The escape is an illusion hiding a much more precarious problem.


A major theme is women fighting against societal issues.

Preconceived notions of women and how they're expected to live their lives have long been challenged. But "once you break down those constrictions, you still need to rebuild that definition," Dickstein added. "There's a continued fight. There is a revelation in the destruction and in the chaos and it's complicated."

Dickstein has created a timely, hypnotic work that explores a shifting universe of gender and power. "Sleep" will make its debut Oct 27 and 28 at the Harold Prince Theater, hosted by the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts. *For more information and tickets, visit www.annenbergcenter.org.*

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3 Things to watch for as Eagles host lowly 49ers

1

Wentz the MVP?

Carson Wentz leads the entire NFL in touchdown passes with 17 and has already had multiple four touchdown games. Watching the highlight reel from Monday's 34-24 victory gives Eagles' fans chills and opposing teams nightmares. He has instincts and can seemingly magician his way out of the murkiest of situations. He could feast against San Francisco. "He studies and prepares like I've never seen before in a quarterback," head coach Doug Pederson said. "And to be this young and to hang in there and take shot after shot, it's just amazing to me that — a lot of guys would probably duck and run or throw the ball away and that's just not in him. That's just not his demeanor. He's going to continue to shoot the ball down the field. And you just see his mental and physical toughness. And it's fun to watch when it's clicking like that and he's playing that well."

2

Overcoming injuries

The Eagles lost two of the most important players they could possibly lose for the rest of the season on Monday night in Jason Peters and Jordan Hicks. At 6-1 the Eagles are in the driver's seat and the Niners won't be as big a challenge as the Chiefs or Redskins were, but seeing how the team's "next men up" perform this week will be informative of how good they can be down the season's stretch run. "When you look at the injury list and the guys that we've lost: Darren Sproles, Chris Maragos, Jason Peters, Jordan Hicks, guys that are significant starters and role players, leaders in your football team, captains on your football team, it can make an impact," Doug Pederson said. "It is definitely the next-man up mentality. And they rally around the guys that are hurt and support them."

3

Sweet schedule

The winless 49ers at home, followed by the faltering Broncos and then a bye week make the Eagles' next few games important. They need to pad their win total before a rough stretch against the Cowboys, Seahawks, Rams and other contending teams later in the year. "We try not to get caught up in it," Pederson said of having the best record. "It's harder, though, every time you do win a game, it is harder. And the bulls-eye on our back becomes bigger and it just becomes a challenge every week, and that's a tribute to the guys in the locker room." EVAN MACY

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Embiid would be wise to pick and choose his battles early in 2017-18

Health continues to be the major concern with the Sixers' big man.

JEFF MCMENAMIN
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Joel Embiid is averaging a double-double so far this season at 20.0 points and 10.5 rebounds per game. GETTY IMAGES

The last time the Houston Rockets saw Joel Embiid on a basketball court, it happened to be the final time the NBA saw the big man play in the 2016-17 season.

Embiid, it was soon discovered, was playing with a torn meniscus in his left knee. His 32 points, seven rebounds, four assists, three steals and two blocks that night in a 123-118 loss to the Rockets showed the transcendent talent that Embiid possesses. But the injury showed just how quickly his talent can be put on the shelf and, whether he wants to admit it or not, how fragile his body has proven to be.

In Wednesday's crushing 105-104 loss to the Rockets, Embiid took a hard fall on a questionable goaltending call late in the fourth quarter. He flipped over the top of Rockets guard James Harden and came crashing to the floor. Following the game, fellow teammates Robert Covington and T.J. McConnell showed concern regarding the play, but Embiid was quick to downplay the fall.

"Everybody's got to stop being scared," Embiid said. "I'm not made of glass."

But from a fans perspective, it's hard not to be scared. After all, Embiid spent the first two seasons of his career on the sidelines due to multiple surgeries on his right foot. When he was finally available to play in the 2016-17 campaign, he appeared in just 31 games before having meniscus surgery.

Even when healthy, Embiid will continue to be on a minute restriction until he can proves he can get through an entire season at full-strength. Embiid has played in four of the Sixers' five games this season, averaging 27 minutes per game. Don't expect him to play during back-to-backs this year, as evidenced by his one game missed so far this season.

In the game he did miss against the Raptors, the Sixers were blown out to the tune of 128-94, a 34-point loss. In the games he has played, the Sixers have just a -1.25 point differential.

That alone shows the importance of having Embiid in the lineup. His presence can completely alter a basketball game. While Philadelphia loves to see a player go above and beyond to hustle for loose balls, posterize an opponent at the rim or swat an opponent's shot into the rafters, the city would much rather have their team at full-strength, even if it means less flashiness on the court.

At 7-foot-2, Embiid has to play smarter and really pick and choose his battles. His falls are longer and harder than the average player and his legs bear the weight of "The Process." The sooner he realizes this and decides to remove himself from harmful situations, the sooner the organization will come to competing for an NBA title in South Philadelphia.

Not being made of glass was an accurate statement by Embiid. The city's just hoping to not add any more scars.

What's on tap?

The Sixers will be back in action Saturday (8:30 p.m., NBC Sports Philadelphia) when they take on the similarly struggling Mavericks, who are also 1-4 on the young season. Dallas features Dennis Smith Jr., who is one of the front-runners for NBA Rookie of the Year along with Ben Simmons. Smith Jr. is averaging 15.0 points and 5.3 assists per game so far this season. Old friend Nerlens Noel leads the Mavs in rebounding, pulling down 6.8 per game. After the Dallas game, the Sixers will head to Houston to face the Rockets on Monday.

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NFL picks for Week 8

Where to place your money on pro football this weekend.

Expect Philip Rivers to shine against a suspect Patriots defense. GETTY IMAGES

Raiders at Bills (-2.5)
Oakland will be without Marshawn Lynch (suspension) as they square off against the league's seventh-best rush defense by YPG.
The pick: Bills -2.5

Chargers at Patriots (-7.5)
Philip Rivers has led a solid aerial attack all season long (eighth by YPG) and will match up against the league's worst pass stoppers.
The pick: Chargers +7.5

Bears at Saints (-9)
Mitchell Trubisky has completed just 50 percent of his passes in three starts to date and will face a Saints defense that's managed a miraculous turnaround during their four-game ATS winning streak. They've allowed just over 270 YPG in their last four contests while forcing turnovers left and right (plus-5 turnover differential last four games).
The pick: Saints -9

Quick picks
(picks in **bold**)

Vikings (-9.5) at Browns in London

49ers at **Eagles** (-13)

Falcons (-4) at Jets

Panthers at Buccaneers (-2)

Colts at **Bengals** (-10.5)

Texans at Seahawks (-5.5)

Cowboys (-2) at Redskins

Steelers (-3) at Lions

Broncos at **Chiefs** (-7.5)

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28 Fools
31 Artists' stands
35 Some parents
36 Scaleless fish
38 Rancher, maybe
39 Give it -- --
40 Burdensome
42 Knot-tying words (2 wds.)
43 Ravi's forte
45 Stitched together
46 Vast number
47 Took advice
49 Hashes over
51 Platform
53 Fall guy
54 Back from work
57 Fiesta shout
59 Tuxedo, often
63 Freed from blame
66 Small eatery
67 Hits the books
68 Deep -- bend
69 Mideast country
70 Ready to use (2 wds.)
71 Get by effort
72 Zhivago's love

Down
1 Hotel name
2 Long for
3 Vacation trip
4 Matriculates
5 Stranger
6 Former NEC rival
7 Isle off Sicily
8 Prepare mushrooms, maybe
9 Ms. Farrow
10 Very deep
11 Reduce to poverty
12 Stepped on
13 Farm flappers
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61 Remote
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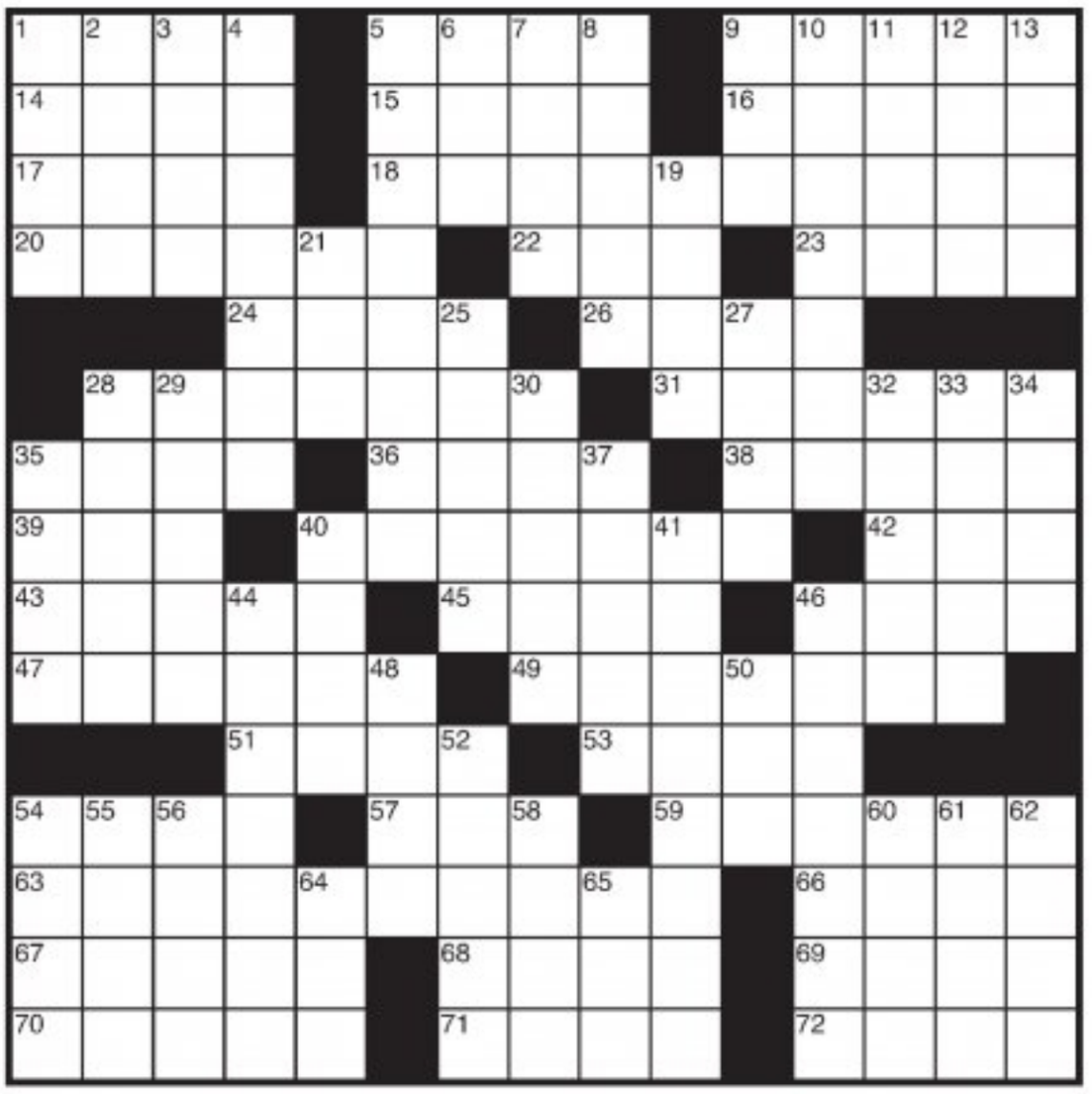

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3			7		9		4	

hard

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						6	4	1
			2					
	3		1	5	4		2	7

metro.us/horoscopes

Aries Spend time and energy on your relationships with others. Love, romance and personal alterations that improve your emotional attitude should be priorities.

Taurus Listen carefully. Emotional matters will escalate if you or someone else refuses to consider all aspects of a situation. The help you offer a stranger will be rewarding.

Gemini A day trip or business meeting will allow you to show off what you have to offer. Socializing with peers will open doors. Romance will improve your life.

Cancer Put your energy into making home improvements and dealing with matters that will help you get along better with your neighbors, roommates or family.

Leo Organize your time. If you neglect friends or family, the complaints will start rolling in. Socializing will help you release stress.

Virgo Situations may not be as they appear. Go over contracts, settlements or joint ventures carefully. Don't overreact when you should size up the situation.

Libra A lifestyle or partnership change can be expected. Think matters through instead of letting your emotions take control. Don't be afraid of the unfamiliar.

Scorpio You'll learn a lot if you listen to complaints as well as suggestions. Use the information you are given to help resolve an emotional situation.

Sagittarius Don't let what others do or say influence you. A moderate attitude will help ward off anyone trying to take advantage of you.

Capricorn Situations will swell up quickly. Controlled emotions and a practical attitude will help you avoid a blowout with someone you care about.

Aquarius Take action and make things happen. An energetic approach to life and happiness will help you win favors. Less talk and more action will bring progressive results.

Pisces Be careful when dealing with partnerships or other people's assets. Sensitive issues will surface that could cause someone to overreact if you aren't careful. EUGENIA LAST

Yesterday's answers

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